Will’s Story

Will first attended Camp Agape in 2009 when he was seven years old. At that young age, he was already an amazing drummer. He could roll seamlessly from snare to tom-tom to cymbal in complicated cadences. He idolized his father who taught him this skill before leaving for prison. Will had a very difficult time at camp that first year. His behavior mirrored the disorder of his young life, and we were unable to keep him safe. He wanted to go home, and his lack of safety required us to send him back home to his grandmother by the second day of camp. Will returned to try camp again when he was nine. By then, he was receiving one-on-one assistance in an alternative school placement. We weren’t sure that we had the skill to do this, but we welcomed him back, prepared to love and accept him with a completely clean slate. Guess what? He loved camp! His attitude was enthusiastic and positive. He formed strong bonds with his counselors and made good friends.

This year, he will return for his fourth summer. Will’s grandmother, the only consistent care-giver in his life, has recently lost her battle with cancer. Again, we don’t know if we have the skill to do this, but we do know that we share a space in God’s heart with Will, and that is all that any of us need.
Camp Agape for Older Kids—2012

During the 2012 camping season, we again offered a free week of camp to children who had aged-out of our basic camp. Kids twelve and older who had previously attended Camp Agape, were offered their choice of either the Camp Agape Older Kids program designed specifically for them, or one of the many other Covenant Hills Christian Camp programs. Seven chose a week of soccer, or music, or movies, as well as outdoor fun. Ten other adventurous souls, with five Camp Agape staff members, participated in the Camp Agape Older Kids program. They enjoyed a week of traveling off-site for a canoe and overnight camping trip, a day serving in a soup kitchen, mask-making in a pottery studio, kayaking, wall-climbing, and the thrill of riding a zip-line. Everyone tried something new, supported each other over the bumps of living in community and working as a team, but most of all, had lots of fun, punctuated with laughter and love.

“\textit{The real point of being alive is to evolve into the person you were meant to be.}”

\textit{An older camper’s bedside poster}

\textbf{National Award} continued from page 1

says Smith. “Some wanted to start similar programs. Some offered to help us find additional funding sources as well as participants. Receiving this award has brought national exposure to the Camp Agape Vermont program.”
So Much Fun—Camp Agape 2012

Eighteen new campers and twenty-nine returning campers enjoyed a program packed with encouragement, challenge, meaning, and, oh yes -FUN! We had many visitors including a mapmaker, a trumpeter, a fisherman, a troop of Rainbow Girls, a drummer. Duncan McDougall from the Children’s Literacy Foundation held the campers rapt with his story-telling before letting them choose two new books each. Cara Gleason, formerly of Kids-A-Part, engaged the campers in making prayer flags to express what lays heavily on their hearts and minds. There was still plenty of time for swimming, archery, hiking, carpentry, campfires, dress-up, and much more.

WHAT’S AHEAD FOR 2013?
The Permanent Fund for the Well-Being of Vermont Children has been a huge supporter of Camp Agape in the past. They are now focusing on programs for very young children. While we search for new sources of support, we have committed to filling a one-week camp with 40 children and tuitioning up to 24 older campers to Covenant Hills, including 10 in the Camp Agape for Older Kids program.

2012 Financial Summary

EXPENSES
Covenant Hills contract (facilities, meals, staff)..............$24,480
Stipends to expand staff..................$1255
Camper gear, supplies......................$3191
Program Coordinator......................$939
Graduate Campers(17)......................$6715
Board/Director’s Insurance..............$1054
Printing, mailing, storage..............$2419
Total Expense............................$40,053

IN KIND DONATIONS
Handmade Quilts.......................$15,200
Donated Supplies.......................$3800
Volunteer Staff @$10/Hr..$21,600
Volunteer Board..@$10/Hr....$6300
Camper Transportation...............$900
Total In Kind Donated................$47,800

REVENUES
Individual Donors .....................$14,041
Congregations..........................$12,879
VT Permanent Fund......................$10,000
Family Foundations.....................$6010
Total Revenues........................$42,930
What Can You Do?

- Do you have a special skill or activity to share with campers?
- Can you spend a week being a friend and mentor at camp?
- Can you gather good new or nearly new books for our campers?
- Can you organize your church to contribute funds or supplies?
- Can you come help with fishing or carpentry times?
- Do you have legal, organizational, or fund-raising talent to share with the board?

“Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”
Desmond Tutu.

The Prayers of Our Campers

Visit our website:
www.campagapevermont.org